



General Assembly

Fifty-third Session

3rd plenary meeting
Tuesday, 15 September 1998, 3 p.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Oportti (Uruguay)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Item 121 of the provisional agenda (continued)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/53/345/Add.1)

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In a letter contained in document A/53/345/Add.1, the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that, since the issuance of his communication contained in document A/53/345, Grenada has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of that information?

It was so decided.

Item 8 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: first report of the General Committee (A/53/250)

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): This afternoon, the Assembly will consider the first report of the General Committee, which has been circulated in document A/53/250. I shall refer to specific sections and paragraphs of the report which contain recommendations for consideration by the Assembly.

In paragraph 2 of its report, the General Committee draws the attention of the General Assembly to the provisions reproduced in annexes V, VI, VII and VIII of the Assembly's rules of procedure. May I take it that the Assembly takes note of those provisions?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In paragraph 3, the General Committee took note of annex I to resolution 48/264 of 29 July 1994, entitled "Guidelines on the Rationalization of the Agenda of the General Assembly", and of the annex to resolution 51/241 of 31 July 1997, entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations system". The provisions of the resolutions are reflected in the document before the General Assembly under the relevant headings.

In paragraph 4, the General Committee draws the attention of the Assembly to the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Assembly resolution 48/264 (document A/52/856) and resolution 51/241 (document A/52/855).

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of paragraph 4?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We shall now examine section II of the report, which deals with the organization of the session.



We turn first to section II.B, dealing with the rationalization of work of the General Assembly.

In paragraph 7, the General Committee draws the attention of the Assembly to paragraph 5 of the annex to resolution 45/45, recommending that certain Main Committees should meet in sequential order.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of paragraph 7?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In paragraph 8, the General Committee draws the attention of the Assembly to paragraphs 30, 31 and 36 of the annex to resolution 51/241, providing that the Main Committees should hold organizational meetings before the commencement of the general debate and meet in substantive sessions only after the end of the general debate; and that the First and Fourth Committees should meet, to the extent feasible, in a sequential manner.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of paragraph 8?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In paragraph 9, the General Committee took note of the fact that measures introduced to reduce costs relating to overtime would be strictly enforced.

We now turn to section II.C on the closing date of the fifty-third session.

As the Assembly is mandated to meet on 10 December for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the General Committee recommends that the fifty-third session should recess on Friday, 11 December 1998.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like to point out that Friday, 11 December 1998, is the date of recess in December 1998 for the fifty-third session. The Assembly will have to decide on a closing date for the

fifty-third session that should fall in accordance with past practice, on a day in September 1999.

In paragraph 11, the General Committee recommends that the First, Special Political and Decolonization (Fourth), Third and Sixth Committees should complete their work by Friday, 20 November; the Second Committee by Friday, 27 November; and the Fifth Committee by Friday, 4 December 1998.

May I take it that the Assembly approves the recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Next, we turn to section II.D concerning the schedule of meetings.

With regard to paragraph 12, the General Committee recommends that morning meetings should start at 10 a.m. promptly for all plenary meetings and meetings of the Main Committees.

May I take it that the Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like to remind members that, for the afternoon meetings, I intend to begin promptly at 3 p.m.

In the same paragraph, the General Committee recommends that, as a cost-saving measure, plenary meetings and meetings of the Main Committees, including informals, be adjourned by 6 p.m. and that no meetings be held on weekends. The Committee further recommends that this cost-saving measure should also apply, for the remainder of 1998, to meetings on the calendar of conferences and meetings of the United Nations.

May I take it that the Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In paragraph 13, the General Committee recommends that, in order to avoid the late start of meetings, the General Assembly should waive the requirement of the presence

of at least one third of the members to declare a plenary meeting open and permit the debate to proceed, and of at least one quarter of the members to declare a meeting of a Main Committee open and permit the debate to proceed.

May I take it that the Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In this connection, I should like to endorse strongly the practical suggestions that were made at previous sessions, for each delegation to designate someone to be present at the scheduled time. I genuinely hope that all delegations will cooperate.

In paragraph 14, the General Committee recommends that delegations should be reminded of the utmost importance of punctuality.

May I take it that the Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In this regard, I should like to impress upon members that a 10-minute delay of the start of every meeting at Headquarters would result in a waste of \$800,000 a year. I therefore sincerely hope that all delegations will make a special effort to cooperate in this regard, so that all meetings can start promptly at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

In section II.E concerning the general debate, the General Committee took note that the general debate would begin on Monday, 21 September, and end on Friday, 2 October 1998.

In paragraph 16, the Committee draws the attention of the Assembly to paragraph 21 of the annex to resolution 51/241, where the Assembly indicated a voluntary guideline of up to 20 minutes for each statement in the general debate.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of paragraph 16?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In this regard, I should like to remind the delegations of the

request by the Secretariat that they speak at a normal speed within the given time-frame at all times to allow for proper interpretation of their statements.

In paragraph 17, the General Committee endorsed the suggestion by the Secretary-General that the list of speakers in the general debate be closed on Wednesday, 23 September, at 6 p.m.

In view of the very large number of speakers already inscribed, I urge representatives to take the floor in the order in which they appear on the list of speakers in the general debate. Those who are unable to speak at the scheduled time will be put at the end of the list for that meeting.

In paragraph 18, the General Committee draws the Assembly's attention to a previous decision of the Assembly to prohibit the practice of expressing congratulations inside the General Assembly Hall after a speech has been delivered. The Committee recommends that this provision should also apply during the fifty-third session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The General Committee also recommends that, after delivering their statements, speakers in the general debate should leave the General Assembly Hall through room GA-200, located behind the podium, before returning to their seats.

May I take it that the Assembly also approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We shall now turn to section II.F.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of the provisions concerning explanations of vote and right of reply contained in paragraph 19?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): May I further take it that it is the wish of the General

Assembly to limit points of order to five minutes as recommended in paragraph 20?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In paragraph 21, the General Committee draws the attention of the General Assembly to paragraph 22 of the annex to resolution 51/241 providing that outside the general debate, there shall be a 15-minute time limit in plenary meetings and in the Main Committees.

In this connection, in paragraph 22, the Committee draws the attention of the Assembly to paragraph 23 of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 51/241 (A/52/855), which states that since in plenary meetings the length of statements in debates other than the general debate averages eight minutes, the General Assembly may wish to review the recommendation contained in paragraph 22 of the annex to resolution 51/241.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of paragraph 22?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): May I take it that the Assembly takes note of the provisions regarding the length of statements contained in paragraph 23?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Section II.G deals with records of meetings.

In paragraph 24, the General Committee took note of the fact that verbatim records would be provided during the fifty-third session for the plenary meetings of the General Assembly and meetings of the First Committee and that summary records would be provided for the meetings of the General Committee and the other Main Committees of the Assembly.

May I take it that the Assembly approves the recommendation contained in paragraph 24 concerning transcriptions of the debates of some of the meetings of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): May I take it that the Assembly approves the recommendation also contained in paragraph 24 that the practice not to reproduce *in extenso* statements made in a Main Committee be maintained for the fifty-third session?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Section II.H concerns concluding statements in the General Assembly and the Main Committees.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of this section?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Section II.I concerns resolutions.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the provisions contained in paragraphs 26 to 29?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We turn now to section II.J concerning documentation.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the provision relating to reports of the Secretary-General or subsidiary organs contained in paragraph 30?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In paragraph 31, the General Committee draws the attention of the General Assembly to paragraph 6 of its resolution 48/264 and to paragraph 4 of its resolution 50/206 C, which emphasize that documentation be available in accordance with the six-week rule for the distribution of the documents simultaneously in each of the six official languages of the United Nations.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of paragraph 31?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In paragraph 32, the General Committee draws the attention of the General Assembly to paragraph 32 of the annex to resolution 51/241 appealing to all bodies to exercise

restraint in making proposals containing requests for new reports and to biennialize and triennialize the presentation of reports.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of this paragraph?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Section II.K refers to questions related to the programme budget.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the provisions contained in paragraphs 33 to 35?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In paragraph 36, which concerns subparagraph 13 (d) of decision 34/401, the General Committee draws the Assembly's attention to the observations by the Secretary-General that the preparation of a statement of programme budget implications by the Secretary-General may take a few days. In addition, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee need adequate time to review the programme budget implications of a draft resolution before the draft resolution can be acted on by the Assembly.

The Secretary-General thus considers it desirable that Member States submit proposals sufficiently in advance to avoid the cancellation of meetings and the postponement of consideration of items.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of the observations of the Secretary-General contained in paragraph 36?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Section II.L concerns observances and commemorative meetings.

We turn first to paragraph 37. The General Committee recommends that, allowing for the necessary flexibility and with the exception of the anniversary of the United Nations, the General Assembly should adopt the suggested format for commemorative meetings, including limiting each statement to 15 minutes.

May I take it that the Assembly approves the recommendations contained in paragraph 37?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): May I take it that the Assembly also approves the recommendation contained in paragraph 38 regarding the scheduling of observances and commemorative meetings?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now invite the General Assembly to turn to section II.M, which refers to special conferences.

May I take it that the Assembly approves the recommendations referred to in paragraphs 39 and 40?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In section II.N concerning meetings of subsidiary organs, the General Committee recommends to the General Assembly, on the strict understanding that meetings would have to be accommodated within available facilities and services, that the subsidiary organs referred to in paragraph 41 be authorized to meet during the main part of the fifty-third session.

May I take it that the General Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We turn now to section III of the report of the General Committee regarding observations on the organization of future sessions of the General Assembly.

In paragraph 42, the General Committee draws the attention of the General Assembly to paragraph 17 of the annex to resolution 51/241 which states, *inter alia*, that the plenary meetings of the General Assembly shall be formally opened every year on the first Tuesday following 1 September.

In this connection, the Committee also draws the attention of the Assembly to the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 51/241 (A/52/855), in particular to paragraphs 16 and 17, which highlight the difficulty encountered in implementing that provision. As stated in paragraph 17 of the Secretary-General's report, in recent years the closing date has been the Monday before the opening of the next session.

Were the General Assembly to retain this practice, the closing date would consistently fall on an official holiday of the Organization, for which financial and other implications may need to be considered. Paragraph 17 of the report further states that the General Assembly may wish to decide on a closing date for future sessions that will fall on a working day.

In paragraph 43, the General Committee recommends to the Assembly to address the question of the opening and closing dates of future regular sessions. In this connection, taking into account the opening date of the regular sessions, the Committee also recommends to the Assembly a review of the question of the mandatory deadline for the submission to the Fifth Committee of all draft resolutions having programme budget implications.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of paragraph 42 and approves the recommendations contained in paragraph 43?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): As mentioned in paragraph 43, by its resolution 52/232, the General Assembly decided only on a closing date for the fifty-second session and on an opening date for the fifty-third session. Therefore, it is not yet known when the fifty-third session will close and when the fifty-fourth session will open.

The General Assembly, during its fifty-third session, should take a decision that will allow Member States and the Secretariat to establish well in advance the exact opening dates of future regular sessions, and consequently their closing dates, as was provided by the present wording of rule 1 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. During the Assembly's consideration of this question, Member States should take into account the observations of the Secretary-General contained in paragraph 17 of his report on the implementation of resolution 51/241.

We turn now to section IV of the report of the General Committee, relating to the adoption of the agenda. This section starts with paragraph 44.

I would first recall rule 23 of the rules of procedure, which provides that:

"Debate on the inclusion of an item in the agenda, when that item has been recommended for

inclusion by the General Committee, shall be limited to three speakers in favour of, and three against, the inclusion."

I think it is important to point out that the limitation of the number of speakers does not apply to other recommendations.

I should also like to stress that at this time we are not discussing the substance of any item.

With regard to paragraph 45, may I consider that it is the wish of the Assembly to direct its Main Committees to review their agendas with a view to streamlining their programmes of work, as suggested in that paragraph?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Again, may I urge members of the Assembly to give careful thought to the suggestion by the Secretary-General, taking into account especially paragraphs 23 to 26 of the annex to resolution 51/241, to consider deferring to a later session items for which decisions and action are not required at the present session.

In paragraph 46, the General Committee recommends the deletion of item 62, "The situation in Burundi", from the agenda of the fifty-third session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In paragraph 47, in connection with item 89 of the draft agenda, "Activities of foreign economic and other interests which impede the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in Territories under colonial domination", the General Committee recommends to the General Assembly that the title of item 89 should read "Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories".

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In paragraph 48, the General Committee recommends that the consideration of item 92 of the draft agenda, "Question of the Malagasy islands of Glorieuses, Juan de Nova, Europa and Bassas da India", should be deferred to the fifty-fourth session and that the item should be included in the provisional agenda of that session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In paragraph 49, the General Committee recommends that the consideration of item 93 of the draft agenda, "Question of East Timor", should be deferred to the fifty-fourth session and that the item should be included in the provisional agenda of that session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In paragraph 50, in connection with item 160 of the draft agenda, "Bethlehem 2000", the General Committee recommends its inclusion in the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In paragraph 51, in connection with item 161 of the draft agenda, "World Solar Programme 1996-2005", the General Committee recommends its inclusion in the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In paragraph 52, in connection with item 162 of the draft agenda, "Observer status for the Association of Caribbean States in the General Assembly", the General Committee

recommends its inclusion in the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In paragraph 53, in connection with item 165 of the draft agenda, "Observer status for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in the General Assembly", the General Committee recommends its inclusion in the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In respect of paragraph 54, the General Committee decided not to recommend the inclusion of item 166.

I now give the floor to the representative of Swaziland.

Mr. Dlamini (Swaziland): Since I am now addressing you, Sir, in your capacity as President of the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, allow me to congratulate you on your election to carry out the important task — that of continuing to shape this international Organization.

It is unusual for my delegation to comment on the presentation of the report of the General Committee. But as a delegation we have, as of this year, found it necessary to continue to express our committed view — especially on paragraph 54, which deals with an agenda item which was presented to the General Committee as item 166.

My delegation, being one of the 30 sponsors of this item, wanted to place on the record the fact that this honourable house has a responsibility to the world community to cater for people in multitudes and for people in minorities. It is also the duty of the United Nations to listen to the voiceless and not to pretend that things are right in the world. For this reason, I want to impress upon the Assembly that the question of resolution 2758 (XXVI) of 25 October 1971 should be revisited, so that the United Nations can live up to the standard

expected by the people who helped establish it and the people who regard the United Nations as a sanctuary for the voiceless and for those not represented in this Assembly.

I want to assure the Assembly that as long as the question of 21.8 million Taiwanese is ignored by the United Nations, my delegation will continue to co-sponsor an agenda item on this subject. I want also to appeal to those delegations which have not yet seen the light as to why such an item is of significance, that one day it should dawn in their minds that they should under no circumstances undermine the views of the 30 Member States that are in support of this position.

It was saddening, during the General Committee debate, that some delegations so easily regarded this as a waste of time. My delegation counts that as an insult to our sovereignty and also to the membership of this organ. There is no item that is a matter of triviality. The United Nations, the way I know it, has a duty and an obligation to listen to whatever appeal is made to it.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): May I take it that the General Assembly decides to approve the recommendation contained in paragraph 54 of the report of the General Committee to the effect that item 166 not be included in its agenda for the current session?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In paragraph 55, in connection with item 167 of the draft agenda, "Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone", the General Committee recommends the inclusion of this item in the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In paragraph 56, in connection with item 168 of the draft agenda — "Fiftieth anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide" — the General Committee recommends the inclusion of this item as a sub-item of item 46 of the draft agenda, "Fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights".

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In paragraph 57, in connection with item 169 — "Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" — the General Committee recommends the inclusion of this item in the agenda.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We turn now to the agenda which the General Committee recommends for adoption by the General Assembly.

In accordance with past practice, we shall follow the numbering given in paragraph 58 of the General Committee's report (A/53/250) and, where it seems appropriate, we shall consider items in groups. I should like to remind members once again that at present we are not discussing the substance of any item, except when such discussion can assist the Assembly in deciding whether or not to include an item in the agenda.

Items 1 to 6 have already been dealt with.

We now turn to items 7 to 48. May I remind members once again that we are dealing only with the question of the inclusion of the items.

May I take it that these items are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): May I take it that items 49 to 62 are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now invite members to turn to items 63 to 80 relating to disarmament. May I take it that these items are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Now we turn to items 81 to 90. May I take it that these items are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Next, we come to items 91 to 98 relating to international economic issues. May I take it that these items are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We turn next to item 99. May I take it that item 99 is included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Items 100 to 110 relate to social and humanitarian questions. May I take it that these items are also to be included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Next, may I take it that items 111 to 145 dealing with administrative and financial questions are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We now turn to items 146 to 156. If there is no objection, I shall take it that these items are included in the agenda.

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We next turn to items 157 to 166. May I take it that these items are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We now turn to section V of the report of the General Committee on allocation of items.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the provisions contained in paragraph 59?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We shall now turn to the recommendations contained in paragraph 60. We shall take up the recommendations one by one.

Before we proceed, may I remind members that the item numbers refer to the agenda in paragraph 58 of the report before us, namely, document A/53/250.

We turn first to the recommendation in paragraph 60 (a) (i), which concerns item 10. May I take it that the General Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We turn next to the recommendation in paragraph 60 (a) (ii) relating to item 18. May I take it that the General Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Next, we turn to the recommendation in paragraph 60 (a) (iii) relating to items 46 (a) and 110 (b). May I take it that the General Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Next, we turn to the recommendation in paragraph 60 (a) (iv) concerning item 49. May I take it that the General Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In connection with paragraph 60 (a) (v) relating to item 62, the General Committee recommends that the General Assembly allocate the item at an appropriate time during the session. May I take it that the General Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We turn now to the recommendation in paragraph 60 (a) (vi) relating to item 99, "Commemorative meeting of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires

Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries".

May I take it that the General Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We turn now to paragraph 60 (a) (vii) relating to item 157, entitled "Bethlehem 2000".

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to consider the item directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We turn now to the recommendation in paragraph 60 (a) (viii) relating to item 158, "World Solar Programme 1996-2005".

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to consider the item directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We turn next to paragraph 60 (a) (ix) relating to item 159, entitled "Observer status for the Association of Caribbean States in the General Assembly".

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to consider the item directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We turn now to the recommendation in paragraph 60 (a) (x) relating to item 162, "Observer status for the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development in the General Assembly".

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to consider the item directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We turn now to the recommendation in paragraph 60 (a) (xi) relating to item 164, "Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa".

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to consider the item directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We turn now to the recommendation in paragraph 60 (b) relating to item 71, entitled "General and complete disarmament". May I take it that the Assembly approves the recommendation pertaining to item 71?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We turn next to the recommendation in paragraph 60 (c) relating to item 85, "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects". May I take it that the Assembly approves the recommendation pertaining to item 85?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We turn now to the recommendation in paragraph 60 (d) relating to item 93 (d), "Renewal of the dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership". May I take it that the Assembly approves the recommendation pertaining to item 93 (d)?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Next, we turn to the recommendation in paragraph 60 (e) relating to item 103, "Advancement of women". May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We turn now to the recommendation contained in paragraph 60 (f) (i) relating to item 163, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone". May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly that the item should be allocated to the Fifth Committee?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We turn next to the recommendation in paragraph 60 (f) (ii) relating to item 165, entitled "Joint Inspection Unit".

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly that the item should be allocated to the Fifth Committee, on the understanding that the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit dealing with subject matters assigned to other Main Committees would be referred also to those Committees?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We shall now turn to paragraph 61 of the report of the General Committee.

I invite members to turn to the list of items recommended by the General Committee for consideration in plenary meeting. Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I consider that the Assembly approves the allocation of the items listed in paragraph 61 of the report of the General Committee for consideration directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We come now to the list of items which the General Committee has recommended for allocation to the First Committee. Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I consider that the Assembly approves the allocation of the items proposed for the First Committee in paragraph 61 of the report of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We come now to the list of items which the General Committee has recommended for allocation to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee). Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I consider that the Assembly approves the allocation of the items proposed for the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) in paragraph 61 of the report of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We come now to the list of items which the General Committee has recommended for allocation to the Second Committee. Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I consider that the Assembly approves the allocation of the items proposed for the Second Committee in paragraph 61 of the report of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We come now to the list of items which the General Committee recommends for allocation to the Third Committee. Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I consider that the Assembly approves the allocation of items to the Third Committee as proposed in paragraph 61 of the report of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We come now to the list of items which the General Committee recommends for allocation to the Fifth Committee. Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I consider that the Assembly approves the allocation of items to the Fifth Committee as proposed in paragraph 61 of the report of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Finally, we come to the list of items which the General Committee recommends for allocation to the Sixth Committee. May I take it that the Assembly approves the allocation of items to the Sixth Committee proposed in paragraph 61 of the report of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of the first report of the General Committee. I wish to thank all the members of the Assembly for their cooperation.

Each Main Committee will receive the list of agenda items allocated to it so that it may begin to organize its work in accordance with rule 99 of the rules of procedure and paragraphs 30 and 31 of the annex to resolution 51/241.

In addition, kindly note that the First Committee, the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), the Third Committee and the Sixth Committee should complete their work by Friday, 20 November, the Second Committee by Friday, 27 November, and the Fifth Committee by Friday, 4 December 1998.

I hope the Main Committees will continue the effort they demonstrated during the fifty-second session to conclude their work on time.

I wish to recall and underline that all meetings must start punctually, at 10 a.m. and at 3 p.m.; I personally intend to ensure that we all keep to our commitment made today. This undertaking also applies to the Secretariat, which must ensure that all documentation, in all six official languages of the Organization, is available on time so that meetings can proceed without any delay.

I should now like to draw the attention of representatives to a matter concerning the participation of Palestine, in its capacity as observer, in the sessions and work of the General Assembly. Members will recall resolution 52/250 of 7 July 1998 and its annex, as well as a note by the Secretary-General contained in document A/52/1002 that outlines the Secretary-General's understanding of the implementation of the modalities annexed to the resolution.

I should like to draw the Assembly's attention in particular to paragraph 6 of the annex to resolution 52/250, which reads as follows:

"The right to make interventions, with a precursory explanation or the recall of relevant General Assembly resolutions being made only once by the President of the General Assembly at the start of each session of the Assembly."

Accordingly, for the fifty-third session of the General Assembly, the observer of Palestine will therefore participate in the work of the General Assembly in accordance with resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, resolution 43/177 of 15 December 1988 and resolution 52/250 of 7 July 1998, with no further need for a precursory explanation prior to any intervention by Palestine in this session.

The meeting rose at 4.10 p.m.